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ABSTRACT

This final report describes activities and accomplishments of the New Jersey Technical Assistance Project, a project to improve educational resources and support services for students with multiple sensory impairment (deaf-blindness). Activities and accomplishments are presented in a tabular format for each project goal and objective. The project addressed seven major goals: (1) improved early identification of infants, children, and youth with multiple sensory impairment; (2) improved provision of an appropriate intervention system for all infants (0-2 years) and their families identified with or at risk for multiple sensory impairment; (3) expansion of opportunities for these children to be educated within their home schools and community environments and/or least segregated/restrictive environment; (4) coordination of educational programs, associated community services, and adult service systems toward providing a smooth transition from school to adulthood for youth with deaf-blindness; (5) provision of services to families to make them more active participants in the education and habilitation of their child; (6) improvement of the existing statewide service systems to better address the needs of this population; and (7) effective and efficient project management. A sample project brochure is attached. (DB)

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ED 391 308

New Jersey Technical Assistance Project (N.J. TAP)

"Educational Resources and Support Services on behalf of Children with Multiple Sensory Impairment"

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State and Multi-State Projects for Children Who Are Deaf-Blind

Final Report

Grant Cycle 1992-95

December 30, 1995

EC 304551

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GOAL 1: IDENTIFICATION

To improve the State's ability and continuing efforts in the early identification of infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 1.1

To make available information and resources regarding the incidence of sensory impairment and the exiting services available to infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
1.1.1 Develop and implement N.J. TAP's Statewide Information and Resource System for Identification and Referral through a dedicated Statewide Toll Free Number.	A systematic approach to the dissemination of information and resources regarding the identification of children with multiple sensory impairment was established through the collection of relevant materials and state system protocols regarding this issue. It was determined that the most effective avenue to disseminate this information was through a proactive and not necessarily responsive to the Project's Toll Free Statewide Number. Therefore, the primary avenue to obtain information regarding identification was a direct contact with a project associate.
1.1.2 Respond to requests for information and referral through N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via Project Associates and a dedicated Statewide Toll-Free Number.	Project Staff responded to an average of approximately 25-30 requests per month for information and resources regarding the incidence of sensory impairment and the existing services available to children with multiple sensory impairment. It has been determined that requests are most effectively addressed through the individual project associates rather than the Toll Free Number Project. The majority of referrals are initiated through the intra-state service support system comprised of N.J. TAP's partners. These include the N.J. Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired, N.J. Division of Developmental Disabilities, Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf and Statewide Parents Advocacy Network.
1.1.3 Develop and disseminate an identification information packet which includes fact sheets on the observable signs of sensory impairment, traditional evaluation protocols, project referral processes and available resources for obtaining further or specific information (Targeted: Infant / Early Childhood)	An identification informational packet was developed, revised and continues to be updated (Available Upon Request). This includes information sensitive to the needs of infants and toddlers. It is disseminated annually in conjunction with the state's child count activity to the local districts and routinely forwarded upon request or need to parents and other programs.

1.1.4 Develop and disseminate an identification information packet which includes fact sheets on the observable signs of visual impairment in students with hearing impairment/deafness, generic evaluation protocols, information on Ushers Syndrome and related visual impairments, project referral processes and available resources for obtaining further or more specific information (Targeted: Students with hearing impairment)	An identification informational packet was developed, revised and continues to be updated (Available Upon Request). This includes information relevant to students with hearing impairment and specific to visual difficulties known to be associated with deafness. This packet has evolved to reflect a series of materials that can be organized to the specific needs of the requester.
1.1.5 Develop a Video and Training Manual which addresses issues of early identification of sensory impairment and promotion of optimal sensory functioning in infants.	This activity was planned in conjunction with the N.J. Department of Health with funding from associated funding sources. Due to circumstances surrounding fiscal constraints and difficulties in statewide procedural guidelines, a video was not developed. In replace of the training video a training module was developed, implemented and currently being revised.
1.1.6 To disseminate Identification and Training Manual to interested Hospital Neonatal Centers, Approved Infant Clinics and Agencies (e.g. Well Baby Clinics) and Early Intervention Centers.	Materials in Identification were disseminated to all Early Intervention Centers across the state. Specific follow up materials were distributed in response to those Hospital Neonatal Centers, approved infant clinics and agencies as well as early intervention programs. These materials reflected information assembled from current literature.

Objective 1.2

To maintain a comprehensive registry of infants, children and youth identified with multiple sensory impairment and a registry of infants at risk.

Activities	Accomplishments
1.2.1 A registry of infants, children and youth identified with multiple sensory impairment and infants at-risk will be maintained within the N.J. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs with limited access assuring maximum confidentiality. Traditional data (limited to number, ages and other dates that do not compromise confidentiality) will be made available upon request through the N.J.TAP's Information & Resource system.	Continued efforts to maintain the most accurate and comprehensive registry of infants, children and youth identified with multiple sensory impairment (including a registry of infants at risk) have been attempted. In collaboration with the N.J. COMMISSION for the Blind & Visually Impaired this registry maintains traditional data as required by the U.S. Department of Education. Due to the fact that deaf-blindness is not a state special education classification, it has been difficult to encourage the local school districts to report those students labeled under another classification to report those identified as deaf-blind. Efforts have been established to train and facilitate a system's change in reporting. In addition, a part-time project associate was established to begin addressing this issue and began with coordinating the child counts between the N.J. Department of Education and the N.J. Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired.

1.2.2 Registry information highlighting newly identified individuals will be routinely submitted to the N.J. Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.	This has been accomplished through the efforts of the part time project associate and the efforts of the project team. At least quarterly meeting have occurred to review newly identified children.
1.2.3 To provide training to local educational agencies on the process of identifying and including students within their Annual IDEA and/or Chapter I (PL 89-313) Child Count. This training will occur in coordination with the SEA's annual training efforts in this area.	Training was provided to all state educational facilities by the Project Coordinator and the Project Director coordinated with the Department of Education personnel overseeing the student count and included a form and guidelines for the submission of information pertaining to students with a combination of vision and hearing impairments. This is a critical component for the Project as there is not a deaf-blind classification within the state .
1.2.4 An annual census report will be generated and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education through N.J. Office of Special Education Programs' Child Count processes as prepared in collaboration with SEA staff.	A census was submitted annually to the U.S. Department of Education which reflected an accurate count of students within the State of New Jersey who are provided supports and services through N.J. TAP. This report is prepared and submitted in collaboration with N.J. Department of Education personnel and in compliance with the state and federal regulations.

TRAINING

Objective 1.3

To provide training to parents and professionals associated with New Jersey's Early Intervention Programs, Hospital Neonatal Centers and Approved Clinics and Agencies in the early identification of sensory impairments.

Activities	Accomplishments
1.3.1 In collaboration with SEA Child Find and Early Intervention Programs, provide information and conduct training which addresses the indicators of sensory impairments and local/state resources available for referral/evaluation.	During the course of this three year cycle over 200 professionals within the early education system in New Jersey received training regarding the incidence and implications of primary sensory impairment. This activities was accomplished through both a proactive and reactive approach and included trainings within statewide conferences, small topical conferences, regional networks and response to requests.
1.3.2 Conduct identification training activities requested by or under the direction of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.	An average of 10-15 specialized trainings in identification were conducted annually as a result of requests made by and under the direction of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired.

1.3.3 Conduct and tailor identification training activities in response to specific requests	25-30 trainings involving identification as a component of another larger training initiative have been conducted per year. The primary focus of these trainings are highly individualized in response to specific needs of a program and the majority have been due to the identification of a single child.

Objective 1.4

To provide training to parents and professionals associated with New Jersey's State Educational Facilities in the identification of sensory impairments

Activities	Accomplishments
1.4.1 As requested, provide training in the identification and referral of infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment to public / approved private facilities (e.g. pediatric nursery facilities, ICFMR facilities, etc.)	15-20 programs per year have received training in identification and referral of children with multiple sensory impairment. These training have been abbreviated awareness level training of approximately 1½ hours. The targeted participants were program administrators and their on-line staff.
1.4.2 In collaboration with the Department of Human Services, Office of Education conduct training in issues of identification of sensory impairments, evaluation and referral to the supervisors of education and other personnel of the State's developmental / day training centers and other facilities.	25-30 trainings per year have been conducted within the state's Day Training and Developmental Centers. These have been in collaboration with the Project's partner, the Department of Human Services, Office of Education. Due to the severity of the multiple disabilities reflected in those children that attend these programs, trainings were generally conducted as half day or full day training sessions. There was an emphasis on awareness of the shared etiologies and functioning.
1.4.3 In collaboration with the Department of Human Services, Office of Education conduct training in issues of identification of sensory impairments, evaluation and referral to the child study team personnel of the State's developmental / day training centers and other facilities.	Trainings were conducted each year to the State's developmental/day training centers and their associated programs. These trainings were abbreviated awareness level trainings specifically designed to child study team members involved in assessment and evaluation.

1.4.4 To provide training in issues of identification of sensory impairments, evaluation and referral to the associated parents organizations (e.g. N.J. Day Training Coalition). A formal offer to conduct this training will be forwarded to each of the identified statewide parent organizations and to each facility to offer their individual parent groups	There has been a weak response of parent groups requesting training in this area. Therefore, the statewide parent group for children with deaf-blindness was single receipt of annual training initiatives. In addition, there is a going effort to train parent of children who are deaf in the incidence of Usher Syndrome and related vision problems.

Objective 1.6

To provide training to parents and professional associated with New Jersey's Programs for students with hearing impairments in the identification of visual impairments and the etiologies / incidence of deaf-blindness

Activities	Accomplishments
1.5.1 To provide an annual training activity to the Round table of New Jersey's Administrators's of Programs for Students with Hearing Impairment regarding issues of identification of visual impairment, evaluation and referral.	Awareness training occurred annually in conjunction with the Office of Special Education's Technical Assistance Services for Students with Hearing Impairment. This has increased the assisted the Project's efforts in gaining access to the programs for students with hearing impairment. Specific initiatives have established regarding individuals program in the areas of environmental and material modification for students with low vision who are deaf.
1.5.2 Develop and conduct a series of trainings addressing Ushers Syndrome and other progressive conditions involving deaf-blindness for program staff, parents and youth at-risk in conjunction with the NJ Office of Special Education Programs' Learning Resource Center	A topical conference presented by Dr. Sandra Davenport was conducted in the third year of this grant cycle. It was attended by approximately 50 professionals and parents. This initiative was then expanded to reflect the planning of an statewide Usher Screening Initiative and the development of an Usher Syndrome Youth Conference. Project staff and a representative from the N.J. Commission for the Blind attended a planning session conducted by TRACES regarding the development of an statewide Usher Syndrome Screening Protocol.
1.5.3 As requested provide staff and/or parent training to programs for students who are hearing impaired for the purposes of providing training in the identification and referral of children and youth with or at-risk of visual impairment.	An average of 10 trainings year were conducted by request to a variety of educational programs for students who are hearing impaired. The majority of these activities represented training regarding a newly identified child within the program. Therefore, training were specific to the needs of that program as well as addressing general issues in identification.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Objective 1.6

To provide technical assistance in response to requests from Educational/Habilitative Service Systems (e.g. EIP's, School Hospitals, etc.) on the development of protocols for identifying sensory impairment in children.

Activities	Accomplishments
1.6.1 As request, conduct on-site technical assistance in the development of screening and other protocols for assessment of sensory functioning (hearing & vision) EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS	The strongest response in this area has been from the State's Early Intervention System. Several programs each year have requested and received technical assistance in the development of sensory functioning assessment. The project has continued to implement further / detailed technical assistance to six of these Early Education Programs regarding their efforts to establish formal functional assessment protocols.
1.6.2 As requested, conduct on-site technical assistance in the development of screening and other protocols for assessment of sensory functioning (hearing & vision) PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT	There has been a weak response in this area from educational programs. Planning assessment and screening initiatives in conjunction with the N.J. COMMISSION for the Blind & Visually Impaired directed toward programs for student with hearing impairment shows promise in further requests for technical assistance in this area.

Objective 1.7

To provide technical assistance in response to requests from parents and/or professionals regarding suspected sensory impairment of an individual child.

Activities	Accomplishments
1.7.1 As requested, provide on-site technical assistance in determining the sensory functioning status of a child suspected but not confirmed of presenting hearing and visual impairment.	Approximately 40-50 requests each year for technical assistance in confirming a child suspected of presenting hearing and vision impairment. It is determined that approximately 50% of these referrals result in confirmed eligibility for services and meet the federal definition.
1.7.2 As requested, provide on-site technical assistance in determining the extent of sensory functioning in children confirmed of presenting hearing and vision impairment. This may be in support of the efforts of program staff, parents or the N.J. Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired.	The 30-40 requests for on-going technical assistance on sensory functioning of children currently on the registry represent repeat technical assistance efforts and/or programs/parents that require monitoring of an individual child. These are primarily accomplished in conjunction with the N.J. COMMISSION for the Blind & Visually so that continued monitoring / support services can be efficient provided by an itinerant Commission instructor.

GOAL 2:	SERVICES TO INFANTS (0-2 years)
To improve the State's ability and continuing efforts in the provision of an appropriate intervention system for all infants (0-2 years) and their families who are identified with or at-risk of multiple sensory impairment (deaf-blindness).	

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Objective 2.1

To make available information and resources regarding the early education and habilitative programming appropriate to the needs of infants at-risk or identified with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
2.1.1 In collaboration with the SEA Child Find Project, the State Early Intervention System and the Department of Health, provide information to medical professionals, therapists and others in the field of health and rehabilitation on the education / habilitation of infants with multiple sensory impairment, available services and resources.	Proactive statewide dissemination of brief project information and awareness literature occurred annually. In addition, brochures were submitted for dissemination by the State Child Find Project. A variety of other dissemination initiatives occurred throughout the project period to individual programs or professional as requested. There were little request for information that were not accompanied by a request for training / technical assistance.
2.1.2 Develop and disseminate an evaluation and program guide regarding infants with multiple sensory impairment, identifying the general programmatic domain areas, specialized intervention strategies, instructional resources and required evaluation protocols.	A Guide of Quality Indicators was established in collaboration with a group of parents of infants with deaf-blindness. This document was developed for the use of parents to evaluate current and/or potential early intervention programs and for programs to self evaluate potential to serve infants who are deaf-blind.
2.1.3 Respond to requests for information and referral regarding the needs of infants at-risk or identified with multiple sensory impairment through N.J.TAP's Information and Resource System via a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	A systematic approach to the dissemination of information and resources regarding the needs of infants at-risk or identified with multiple sensory impairment was established through the collection of relevant materials and state system protocols regarding this issue. It was determined that the most effective avenue to disseminate this information was through a proactive and not necessarily responsive to the Project's Toll Free Statewide Number. Therefore, the primary avenue to obtain information regarding identification was a direct contact with a project associate.

2.1.4 Develop and conduct a series of "Ask A Pro" Sessions focused on the needs of infants at-risk or identified with multiple sensory impairment through N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	Results of the project's attempt to conduct a "Ask A Pro " Session were extremely poor. It appears that this avenue for dissemination of information may not effective. Therefore, a focus group / subcommittee of the Statewide Parent Organization for Individuals who are deaf-blind has agreed to assist the project the redesign of this approach.

TRAINING

Objective 2.2

To provide training to programs and families involved in the provision of support, education and habilitation of infants with or at-risk of multiple sensory impairment. This includes programmatic areas such as transition planning, integrated therapy strategies, early intervention educational strategies, early mobility or orientation techniques, communication development, positioning and functional vision/auditory evaluation.

Activities	Accomplishment
2.2.1 As requested, conduct a program review and generate recommendations regarding the provision of services available to infants with multiple sensory impairment.	Program evaluations were conducted on six educational programs that requested a review. An excess of 20 programs requested the evaluation of individualized programs for specific children. These were completed in concert with technical assistance activities anchored to individual students.
2.2.2 As requested , provide training anchored to program staff and/or parents in the provision of services to infants with multiple sensory impairment.	20-25 Training Activities per year have been anchored to specific program staff and/or parent in the provision of services to infants with multiple sensory impairment. These activities have been have linked to technical assistance activities. Training has focused on an array of topics to include communication, transdisciplinary approaches to support services, and transition from IEP to preschool.

Objective 2.3

To develop a Regional Network of at least Early Education Programs that present the required expertise to address the specialized needs and attention of infants and toddlers with multiple sensory impairment and their families.

Activities	Accomplishments
2.3.1 Identify at least three Early Education Programs (North-Central-South) that are willing to participate in an Early Education Network Program specializing in the needs and attention of infants with multiple sensory impairment and their families. This includes the identification of an interdisciplinary team within each program.	5-7 Teams were identified each year through an established application process. This process included statewide dissemination as well as targeted invitations to participate in this initiative. This represents training of teams that included parents, teachers, related services staff and administrators. Over 100 individuals were trained (skill development) over the three year grant cycle.
2.3.2 Conduct a program review and develop a training plan, based on topical areas through a case-study approach, for each of the three network Early Education Programs.	As a component of the Early Education Network Team Training, each participating program conducted a self study program review and developed a training plan that specifically addresses the of the program. This was conducted annually under the guidance of Project Staff and Consultants. Significant improvement of the majority of programs was noted.
2.3.3 Conduct bi-monthly training/meetings of the Early Education Network Program Teams to implement the topic areas study strands (e.g. Communication Development)	5-6 Bi-monthly full day training sessions were conducted each year as well as associated on-site consultations throughout the course of the three year grant cycle.
2.3.4 Within the context of the bi-monthly training/meeting the Early Education Network Program teams will be trained and given the opportunity to practice effective methods of providing technical assistance. This training will be infused within the context of the topical content training and throughout the duration of the program.	In order to meet the comprehensive skill development objectives, the training schedule did not allow for the extent of technical assistance delivery training. Therefore, an abbreviated session on effective delivery of technical assistance was conducted each year and teams were required to conduct a formal presentation of the year's accomplishments.
2.3.5 When appropriate include the designated regional Early Education Network Programs in the provision of technical assistance involving an infant in that specific region.	During this three year cycle, opportunities to engage teams in the delivery of regional technical assistance. Specific initiatives toward building a unified regional system of programs and people trained in content areas have been planned. There was evidence of regional parent to parent support (team parent participants providing guidance to other parents in the region) and technical support of team members to local programs within their own system.

GOAL 3: SERVICES TO CHILDREN

To maintain and expand the opportunities for all children with multiple sensory impairment to be educated within their home schools and community environments and/or least segregated/restrictive environment.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Objective 3.1

To make available information and resources to families and professionals regarding best practices in the education/habilitation of children with deafblindness and with specific focus on supported inclusive education.

Activities	Accomplishments
3.1.1 Develop and disseminate an evaluation and program guide regarding the education/ habilitation of children with multiple sensory impairment with an emphasis on inclusive education and it's associated practices.	The project has compiled and modified evaluation/assessment tools which address the needs of students with multiple sensory impairment, as well as composing guidelines which address best practices for the education of students including community based instruction, futures planning, supported inclusive education, and assistive technology. This information has been shared with an array of educational professionals and family members to assist in accessing and implementing quality educational programs for our students with multiple sensory impairment.
3.1.2 Respond to requests for information and referral regarding the education of children with multiple sensory impairment through Project Associates and/or N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	The Project Associates respond to requests for information and resource on a daily basis. This activity includes sharing information on project services, other available resources, issues surrounding communication, educational programs, assistive technology, transitional planning, challenging behaviors, etc... The use of the toll-free number has been limited during it's implementation in the last year of the project's initiatives. We are reassessing its purpose and have requested assistance from the state parent organization PRISM in evaluating its function and most efficient use.
3.1.3 Develop and conduct a series of "Ask-A-Pro" Sessions focused on education issues of children with multiple sensory impairment through N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	In a discussion with the state parent group, they did not feel that the "Ask A Pro" series via the toll-free number was an effective outreach program to families and suggested we include a section within the N.J. TAP newsletter that has a specific section that addressed questions from family members as it related to the topic (i.e. transition) of the newsletter.

TRAINING

Objective 3.2

To provide training to professionals and families associated with LEAs and other educational programs regarding the provision of support, education and habilitation of students with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
3.2.1 As requested, provide training to programs and families involved in the provision of support, education and habilitation of students with multiple sensory impairment. This may include such programmatic areas as ecologically sound assessment, functional activities based curricular development, alternative communication strategies, educational strategies which promote inclusion (cooperative education, peer tutoring, assistive technology and community instruction.	Training is provided to school programs on an average of twice per month as it relates to the needs of the student(s) who are being provided an educational program within that district. The audience for this activity can include personnel who are working directly with a student with multiple sensory impairment or can be inclusive of all the school/district personnel. Training is designed around the needs and specific issues of the school/district and not limited in scope. These activities can include a one hour to a full day training based on the time allotted by the educational program and associated administration.
3.2.2 To provide a statewide training to N.J. State Facilities' (Developmental and Day Training Centers) , child study teams and instructional staff in the evaluation and educational programming of children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.	The Project Coordinator presents annually to the Supervisors of Education within state facilities on issues surrounding children and youth with multiple sensory impairment and services and supports that can be accessed through N.J. TAP. State child study teams are apprised of the needs of students with deafblindness yearly at a regularly scheduled meeting. Individual trainings are provided to state educational facilities, as requested, on approaches to working with students experiencing vision and hearing impairments, the impact on the whole sensory system and approaches to learning.
3.2.3 Develop and conduct N.J. TAP Core Courses I, Educating the Child with Multiple Sensory Impairment and Core Courses Series II, Parent Training.	The Parent Training Series training was provided at the annual Institute for Summer Studies and addressed topics surrounding guardianship, advocacy, special education law, Medicaid and SSI, and the vocational rehabilitation act. The Core Course, Series I training was embedded into the training provided to the regional network teams and through the topical conferences held within each year of the grant. These topical conferences included topics ranging from Usher and Charge Syndrome to Orientation and Mobility and Functional Sensory Assessment

3.2.4 In collaboration with the SEA's CSPD initiative, conduct an Institute for Summer Studies topical workshop on programmatic issues related to the education of children with multiple sensory impairment. Program will focus on the provision of educational services within home and school settings, and methods for promoting community integration.	N.J. TAP sponsored an annual Institute for Summer Studies over the course of the grant and provided training to families, professionals, direct care personnel and others as it related to the education/habilitation of children and youth with multiple sensory impairment. Topics included alternative approaches to communication, futures planning, functional age appropriate curricular, sensory assessment, supported inclusive education, supported employment and community based recreation/leisure (please note the trainings outlined in 3.2.3). This initiative was developed and implemented in conjunction with the N.J. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, CSPD personnel. Additionally, we collaborated with N.Y. TAP in the first two years of the grant cycle in providing a Summer Institute that brought professionals and families from two states together to learn, plan and engage in cooperative activities.
3.2.5 Conduct training activities regarding the education of students with multiple sensory impairment as requested by and under the direction of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.	N.J. TAP has been working in collaboration with the N.J. Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired during this grant cycle and has provided training on behalf and in conjunction with personnel for the Deaf-Blind Unit. These training activities have been embedded in the Network Team trainings, to local school personnel, direct service staff and families. These training/support activities have occurred approximately once per month for the past three years.

Objective 3.3

To provide training a the pre-service level to state colleges and universities' teacher preparation programs on indicators of sensory impairment, ecologically sound assessments and state-of-the-art programming for students with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
3.3.1 To provide training in conjunction with the CSPD Inclusive Education Conference for state colleges on strategies and programming which support inclusion of students with multiple sensory impairment into their homes, schools and local communities.	The Project Director was an active participant in this initiative in engaging consultants to provide this state-of-the-art training, assisting in the planning, organizing and implementation, and providing follow-up contact with colleges interested in gaining more information pertaining to students with multiple sensory impairment. This collaborative effort with the CSPD Inclusive Education Conference has had a positive impact on all students with disabilities including those students who are deafblind.

3.3.2 To develop and provide training for undergraduate and graduate education students which addresses identification of sensory impairments, best educational practices and programmatic strategies which influence the movement into less segregated/restrictive educational and community environments.	The Project Director and Project Coordinator developed training materials which addresses the specific topics and approaches to teaching at the pre-service level. Identified areas of need included understanding and identifying students who have a multiple sensory impairment, approaches to working with students, resources and services available to provide assistance and support, inclusion in less restrictive educational settings, and other general areas including communication and assistive technology.
3.3.3 As requested, provide inservice training to teacher preparation programs at state colleges and universities on professor or department identified issues/topics relating to the education of students with multiple sensory impairment.	The Project Associates provided training to graduate and undergraduate students at an array of colleges throughout the state. These trainings were provided during the fall and spring semesters and addressed issues surrounding supported inclusive education, understanding the unique educational needs of students who have sensory impairments, identification of students who are deafblind, community based instruction and positive approaches to challenging behaviors. Programs preparing teachers of special education and teachers of the hearing impaired were targeted for training.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Objective 3.4

To develop three Regional Demonstration and Network(RD&N) sites which present the required expertise in the specialized educational needs of children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
3.4.1 Identify at least three Regional Demonstration Sites (North-Central-South) that are willing to participate in the N.J. TAP RD&N Program. Eligible programs must currently and historically provide educational services to students with multiple sensory impairment and their families	Teams were identified on a yearly basis through an application process which was disseminate via the N.J. Department of Education to school district providing educational programs to students identified as deafblind. Requirements for this application included identifying at least two students who were deafblind, team participants included a family member, educational personnel, related service personnel, and/or other members including the Division of Developmental Disabilities, residential staff, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired... Additionally, teams had to provide a statement of support from their administration. Teams were selected to represent the northern, central and southern portions of the state. A maximum of five teams were included.

3.4.2 As requested, conduct a program review and generate recommendations regarding the provision of educational programming available to students with multiple sensory impairments	Provided program reviews, as requested, to applicants interested in participating in the Regional Demonstration and Network Program to identify students, determine needs and applicability to the network trainings to be provided. Teams not selected were provided with technical assistance and training as per the review and determined needs/concerns in the provision of education to students with multiple sensory impairment.
3.4.3 Conduct a program review and develop a training plan for each of the three RD&N Program sites.	Designated Project Associates visited the selected teams prior to training to determine their current training needs and to assist the project in establishing a comprehensive and meaningful training plan for each year. Team members and administration were interviewed, focus student(s) were observed/interviewed (as appropriate) and an agreed approach to training and support were developed.
3.4.4 In accordance with the agreed training plan, provide training to each of the three RD&N Program sites.	Individual training was provided to sites that requested inservice support to the team members or the educational personnel around team collaboration, the specific topic for that year or generic issues pertaining to the education of students with multiple sensory impairment. Training to sites was determined on an individual basis and in conjunction with the RD&N initiative.
3.4.5 Conduct bi-monthly trainings of the Regional Demonstration and Network Program teams focused on yearly topics (e.g. futures planning) based on a person centered (case study) approach. These bi-monthly training/meetings address content areas, technical assistance outreach efforts and assessment of the networking processes	Trainings were provided by the Project Associates in conjunction with consultants possessing an expertise in the focus area. The first year the teams were provided training in the area of "Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviors". The second year, training on Futures Planning was provided. The third year the teams were engaged in developing Community Based Instructional Plans for their students including supported employment initiatives. The selected teams met on a bi-monthly basis and developed action plans for their focus person at the end of each session that they had to implement during the interim month. Project Associates provided on-site visits and support, as requested
3.4.6 Within the context of the bi-monthly training/meeting RD&N Program teams will be trained and given the opportunity to practice effective methods of providing technical assistance. This training will be infused within the context of the topical training and throughout the duration of the program.	Consistent training regarding the provision of technical assistance was infused in all the training activities to assist the team members in providing assistance to their school/district as it related to students with multiple sensory impairment and best educational practices. The intent of this training activity was to develop expertise within the team members on state-of-the-art educational practices for students who are deafblind and to transfer this information to others within their school system or within their region, as needed.

3.4.7 When appropriate include the designated Regional Demonstration and Network Program team in the provision of technical assistance involving a student within that specific region.	Project Associates engaged members of the network teams in a number of technical assistance and training activities over the course of the grant cycle. This included individual technical assistance activities anchored to an individual or statewide/regional/local training activities addressing the area specific to the training they were provided and had the opportunity to implement.
3.4.8 Identify at least one student per year within each of the three regions of the state (north, central, south) and provide extensive technical assistance/training in the development of a successful inclusive education program.	Project Associates focused on these individual students within each team to assist with including that student in a less restrictive/more integrated educational setting. Teams were made aware from the onset of this training initiative that N.J. TAP's focus was to assure that students with multiple sensory impairment are provided with opportunities to access an education within regular education programs with the appropriate supports. Teams worked collaboratively with project personnel to develop opportunities for their inclusion within community settings. The selection of yearly training topics reflected best practices and emphasized the inclusion of students in environments that allowed opportunities for interaction and networking with typical peers.

Objective 3.5

To provide technical assistance anchored to an individual child regarding specialized educational and/or habilitative needs identified by parents and/or professionals.

*** Activities are prescribed as per the identified individual needs and may require any range of technical assistance services.**

Accomplishments

Technical assistance was provided at a minimum of three times per week from N.J. TAP Project Associates. These activities were geared to the individual needs of the child and/or the family. Included in this activity was assistance in the inclusion of a child into a regular education setting, the development of MAP/PATHS/ Futures Planning, transition planning, assistance with alternative approaches to communication, medical issues surrounding varying syndromes/etiologies, assistive technology needs, access to state resources including the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Deaf-Blind services, involvement in parent groups/organizations, understanding the visual and auditory issues, approaches to assessment and evaluation, support in the development of the IEP and attendance at IEP meetings, utilizing positive approaches to challenging behaviors ... to name a few. These supports were provided on an as needed basis. Therefore, based on the need/request one student/family may require technical assistance over a period of a year where another student/family may need the project's assistance for a day. However, our mission is to empower families/students/professionals and not to have them depend on the N.J. Technical Assistance Project.

Objective 3.6

To provide technical assistance anchored to an individual child regarding specialized educational and/or habilitative needs identified by parents and/or professional.

Activities	Accomplishments
3.6.1 As requested, conduct a program review and generate recommendations regarding the provision of educational programming available to students with multiple sensory impairment.	Project Associates have been engaged by school districts and educational programs to review services provided to their students who are experiencing a multiple sensory impairment. Recommendations provided were based on the curricula, modifications/adaptations to the environments, inclusion in less restrictive educational settings, utilization of appropriate assistive technology, development of parent-school partnerships and assistance in accessing resources within the region/community.
3.6.2 As requested, provide training anchored to program staff and/or parents in the provision of educational programming available to students with multiple sensory impairment.	Trainings designed around inclusion and best practices for students with multiple sensory impairment were provided on an as needed basis to many school districts/programs for whom N.J. TAP was providing technical assistance . These trainings assisted program personnel in understanding the unique needs of students who are deafblind and the implications to educational planning and inclusion within typical environments. The objective of these trainings was to empower the schools to better serve students with multiple sensory impairment in the present and the future.

GOAL 4: SECONDARY PROGRAMS AND TRANSITION PLANNING

To improve and expand the coordination of educational programs, associated community services and adult service systems toward providing a smooth transition from school to adulthood for youth identified as deafblind.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Objective 4.1

To make available information and resources regarding the transition planning process and state-of-the-art secondary programming which positively influences the successful movement into adult life for youth with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
4.1.1 Respond to requests for information and referral regarding transition planning process and state-of-the-art secondary programming which positively influences the successful movement into adult life for youth with multiple sensory impairment through N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via Project Associates and Statewide Toll-Free Number.	Project Associates respond weekly to requests for information regarding this critical area of movement into adult life. Information is disseminated via the mail or fax on current literature, state and federal regulations/codes, articles, formats for the development of transition plans ... Additionally, referrals are made the Helen Keller National Center - TAC, N.J. adult service agencies including DDD and CBVI vocational services, private non-profit programs providing community based housing, supported employment agencies and other state and local agencies supporting young adults with disabilities and multiple sensory impairment. The toll-free number has been utilized minimally and has not been viewed as the most effective method for the dissemination of information at this point in time.
4.1.2 Develop and conduct a series of "Ask-A-Pro" sessions focused on secondary educational issues including the transition to adulthood of youth with multiple sensory impairment through N.J. TAP's Information and Resource System via Project Associates and a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	The Ask-A-Pro series have not been found to be the most effective method of information sharing and will be transferred into the project newsletter which addresses individual topic area per newsletter. Transition Planning is slated to be the key topic for the upcoming fall newsletter.

Objective 4.2

To implement and maintain a system which will evaluate the status of all youth with multiple sensory impairment in terms of employment and community living.

Activities	Accomplishments
4.2.1 Develop a data base system which will maintain the current status, service needs and anticipated post-secondary outcomes for participating youth and for whom N.J. TAP was involved in transition planning	This data base has been established and is being modified and updated to include all students who have exited the educational system within the past five years. A survey format has been developed and will be disseminated in the upcoming grant cycle to determine residential, employment, higher education, recreation/leisure and services being utilized for each graduate. The project expects to have valid, confirmed information by the end of FFY '96.

4.2.2 Develop a follow-up system to track students for whom N.J. TAP was involved in transition planning.	Some difficulty has been experienced in accessing information on students not previously served by N.J. TAP. However, the N.J. Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's Deaf -Blind Unit has been assisting the project in accessing current information and in acquiring the residential information for graduated students. For students who have graduated in the past several years and have worked closely with N.J. TAP, the project has been able to maintain contact and establish an effective tracking system
4.2.3 Analyze and report data regarding the transition aged students with multiple sensory impairment to appropriate educational and adult service agencies.	In an effort to assist with the smooth transition of our students into the adult world, N.J. TAP has established strong working relationships with adult service agencies within the state. Representatives from these agencies sit on the N.J. State Interagency Transition Team(N.J. SITT) which meets bi-monthly to determine the adult service needs of students with multiple sensory impairment and translates this information to their respective agencies.

TRAINING

Objective 4.3 To provide training to professionals and families associated with state education facilities, LEAs and other educational programs in current instructional strategies which promote the successful movement into adult life for youth with multiple sensory impairment.	
Activities	**Accomplishments**
4.3.1 As requested, conduct training in transition planning and transition sensitive programming for youth with multiple sensory impairment.	Project Associates have had the opportunity to conduct training related to planning for the transition of students into a preferred adult life to several educational programs throughout the state that have been providing educational services to students with multiple sensory impairment. Inservices included the development and implementation of secondary programming which reflected the student's and family's desired outcomes, writing IEPs which reflected goals, objectives and activities which supported adult outcomes, and the implementation of community based instruction including job sampling.

4.3.2 Conduct a series of statewide topical (one day) training sessions for parents and professionals regarding the following: -Developing advocacy skills/promoting self-advocacy -Implementation of community based instruction -Accessing community recreation and leisure activities -Inclusive supported secondary educational programming -Assistive Technology for students with sensory impairments.	In conjunction with the New Jersey Transition Partnership, presentations were provided statewide regarding issues surrounding advocacy/self-determination, secondary programs which reflect transition planning and community based instruction focusing on job sampling. N.J. TAP embedded these training sessions into the Institute for Summer Studies and a yearly topical conference. The targeted audience included educators, direct care personnel, child study team members, related services personnel, administrators and family members.
4.3.3 Conduct a comprehensive training program in the facilitation of "futures planning" for youth with multiple sensory impairment. Project Associates, select parents and Regional Demonstration and Network teams will be targeted for this training.	During the 1993-1994 school year, the RD&N teams were provided with training on futures planning which was actualized through a person centered approach (case study). Each selected team selected two students and attended bi-monthly training sessions regarding the development of MAPS, transferring this information to an instructional plan and providing educational programs which reflected future needs and desires. Project Associates provided on-site support around the focus students throughout the year and continued with follow-up support, as needed.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Objective 4.4

To provide technical assistance in response to requests from educational and habilitative service systems regarding education and support services which positively influence the movement of youth with multiple sensory impairment into a successful adult life (Technical Assistance addressing Systems)

Activities	Accomplishments
4.4.1 As requested, conduct a program review and generate recommendations regarding the provision of secondary educational programming available to students with multiple sensory impairment.	At a school district/educational program request, review current curricula and program initiatives to determine the need for modifications/changes which would best support the movement of students into a preferred adult life. This included assessment/evaluation (functional) protocols, community based instruction, inclusive education, communication systems, assistive technology, and adaptations/modifications for the sensory issues. A plan would be devised with these programs and N.J. TAP personnel was made available to assist in the development and implementation of these plans, as requested.

4.4.2 As requested, provide training anchored to program staff and/or parents in the provision of transition sensitive educational programming available to students with multiple sensory impairment.	Training was provided, upon request, to several school programs regarding planning and implementing programming which reflected the movement of young adults with deafblindness into adult life. Training was provided approximately 5 times per year to programs providing an education to students with multiple sensory impairment. Parents/Families engaged N.J. TAP in providing training on this topic through the Institute for Summer Studies, Family Track and/or were included within the training provided at the school level.
4.4.3 Project Associates trained in the facilitation of futures planning will conduct futures planning activities anchored to individual students.	Project Associates have facilitated the development of MAPS and PATHS for individual students by including family members, pertinent school personnel, friends and community members to assist in planning for the future of young adults with multiple sensory impairment since the second year of the grant cycle. In the 2nd Annual Family Learning Weekend, eight families were engaged in the development of family PATHS and have been provided follow-up by Project Associates and CBVI personnel regarding the action steps and time lines. Individual futures planning activities have been provided on an on-going basis for all families of a transition aged child.

GOAL 5: SERVICES TO FAMILIES

To offer and provide services to parent/guardian (and other family members) to support and increase their ability to become more active participants in the education and habilitation of their child with multiple sensory impairment.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Objective 5.1

To make available information and resources to families regarding issues surrounding their child with multiple sensory impairment to include Project services, state/local services, national resources and a variety of information related to educational practices.

Activities	Accomplishments
5.1.1 To respond to request for information and referral through Project Associates and N.J.TAP information and Resource System via a Statewide Toll-Free Number.	There has been an extremely low response to the request for information & resources via the Toll Free Number. Therefore, the plans have been established for the development of a focus group of parents to address the necessity and/or feasibility of the Tool Free Number Program. Due to the small geographic area of New Jersey this type of I & R support is not necessary and funds can be better utilized.
5.1.2 To maintain updated resources sensitive to the needs of families and parents of children with multiple sensory impairment.	A comprehensive resource bank has been established through our Information & Resource initiative. These include a variety of resources from parent manuals to easy-to-read fact sheets. Plans for the computerization of the materials bank has been planned for the next contract cycle.
5.1.3 To develop and disseminate a series of "fact sheets" addressing an array of issues and topics pertaining to families of children with multiple sensory impairment.	Fact sheets have been developed primarily regarding the project initiatives and the variety of training venues. In addition, fact sheets have been developed in concentrated areas of technical assistance such as deaf-blind definition, communication and sensory status assessment.

5.1.4 Develop and disseminate a parents guide/manual which will focus on developing a profile for their child. This guide /manual could include suggested questions to ask medical personnel (e.g. Ophthalmologists, Audiologists, etc.); checklists for preparation for IEPs and other routine educational practice, and sample correspondence for requests, concerns, etc.	A parent guide has been developed in a file form and is currently being transferred into a manual form that has the flexibility to be modified as new material is added or changed. This includes the fundamental material that a parent of a child who is deaf-blind may need. It also references other statewide parent manuals so not to duplicate material. The Statewide Parents Advocacy Network Project disseminates a comprehensive parent guide of generic information that the N.J. TAP will purchase and disseminate to those parents that request and can't afford the $10.00 fee.

TRAINING

Objective 5.2

To provide training to parents and families on family support, leadership and advocacy as it relates to their chid with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishment
5.2.1 In conjunction with the Institute for Summer Studies, conduct a statewide parent advocacy conference as a response to recognized and documented needs of those families of children with multiple sensory impairment.	Each year of this contract cycle a parent advocacy component to the N.J.TAP Institute for Summer Studies has been conducted. A series of topical sessions were provided in response to the parental needs as indicated by needs assessment. This was done under the guidance of the State's Statewide Family Organization, PRISM,Inc.
5.2.2 In collaboration with The PRISM Organization, Inc. And the Parent Project Associate for Family Support, will review the current warmline program (a statewide telephone parent to parent network) to determine effective components and will re-develop the program to incorporate outreach, support and I&R activities.	A subcommittee chaired by the Parent Project Associate for Family Support and consisting of interested parents from the PRISM Organization, Inc. was established. This committee convened over the course of a year and submitted the recommendation to suspend this program and redesign it to include possible telephone hours for open forum with veteran parents available. While the committee works with N.J.TAP to redesign, the committee has agreed to participant in any needed veteran parent support activity designated. The has been over 15 new parents that have availed themselves of support from this committee. It appears that a system similar to this interim solution will be developed.
5.2.3 To conduct a parent leadership conference to maintain and support a statewide parent's organization. This conference will be part of N.J.TAP's Institute for Summer Studies. In conjunction with the parent leadership conference, The Prism Organization, Inc. Will conduct their annual meeting.	Each year during the N.J. TAP Institute for Summer Studies a parent leadership session with a reception for parents was conducted under the direction of the PRISM Organization, Inc. In addition, the PRISM Organization, Inc. conducted its annual meeting and yearly subcommittee meetings.

5.2.4 To conduct follow-up to the summer parent leadership conference with two annual regional (North-South) leadership conferences for parents.	Each year these small follow up sessions were accomplished as sessions linked to topical conferences on specific areas of interest. These included Mobility & Orientation, Functional Vision Assessment, Usher Syndrome, CHARGE Syndrome, Personal Future's Planning, Early Communication and Positive Behavior Supports.
5.2.5 Collaborate with existing SEA Learning Resource Center initiatives relating to the IEP and IFSP process and parental roles and responsibilities for provisions of inservice training to parents and families of children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.	An agreement has been established between the SEA Leaning Resource Center and the N.J.TAP that would allow the Special Education Consultants within the Learning Resource Center (4 Regional Centers) to respond to training needs of parents with children who are deaf-blind regarding special education regulations and parental rights. Several trainings activities were conducted over the course of this contract cycle. In addition, the Special Education Consultants are and have been responsive to individual questions and guidance.

Objective 5.3

To provide a variety of training activities for parents and families of children with dual sensory impairment in regards to best practices in education/habilitation and mandated educational processes.

Activities	Accomplishments
5.3.1 In conjunction with the PRISM Organization, Inc. and the Parent Project Associate for Family Support, develop and conduct two regional training workshops for parents and families of children and youth with multiple sensory impairment involving the overall goal of encouraging parental involvement in education and addressing the specific concerns/needs of their children. (Home-School Collaboration through the principles of a Collaborative Teaming Approach)	Due to the response to these trainings, one statewide training session was conducted annually. The trainings focused on areas of organization and planning techniques and included establishing home-school collaboration, creative problem solving techniques and the use of MAPS in the development of IEPs.
5.3.2 Infuse issues of parents and family involvement in all appropriate Project training activities to include transition planning, promoting inclusive education, validated practices in educational programming, etc.	Issues surrounding families was consistently incorporated in all areas of training. The promotion of parent/professional relationships is viewed as a key component of successful planning and implementation of educational programs that are truely reflective of the individual needs and strengths of each child.

5.3.3 To conduct a Family Leaning Weekend for a minimum of six families per year which focuses on the following: - Address the individual needs of each family particularly in the context of their child with multiple sensory impairment. Fa Families will leave with an action plan and commitment of support; - Address the needs and concerns of siblings; - Collect qualitative documentation of families' needs and unique experiences; - Provide information and skill development in educational related areas.	Spring 94: Ten Families participated in a weekend (fri-sun) training that focused on the creative problem solving process. Each identified a critical problem and proceeded through the process to create the most feasible solutions. In addition, siblings were provided activities through efforts of a trained child psychologist specializing in the support of siblings of families with child who have a disability. The weekend was held at a New Jersey Shore Resort. Fall 95: Eight Families participated in a weekend (fri-sun) training that focused on the PATH (Planning Positive Possible Futures) process. Each family developed a PATH during the weekend which provided a plan for the a specific area or issue. The weekend was held at a New Jersey Shore Resort.

Objective 5.4

To increase the availability of trained respite and child care workers prepared to address the needs of children with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
5.4.1 To develop a training protocol to address the preparation of respite and child care workers to meet the needs of children with multiple sensory impairment.	An outline for a training protocol was developed and executed through the Project child care services program. Standards were developed and a specific training program is currently being completed under the guidance of the PRISM Organization, Inc. Difficulties in developing specific protocols was experienced due to the lack of interest in using training so alternative are being consider such as quality indicators and/or a check-list for families in their consideration of child care.
5.4.2 To conduct regional and targeted training of prospective respite and child care workers	Due to a lack of response to regional or targeted trainings, efforts in this area were conducted on an individual basis through the requests of individual families.
5.4.3 As requested, to train individual or small groups of respite and child care worker to appropriately meet the need of children with multiple sensory impairment.	The N.J. TAP child care support services conducted small group trainings for every family learning weekend and institute for summer studies. The 10-15 child care workers were provided a two hour training session that addressed general issues and specific child issues.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Objective 5.5

To provide technical assistance anchored to individual families as it relates to identified needs and supports for their child with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
Activities are prescribed as per identified individual needs and may require any range of technical assistance services or support.	The majority of each project associates time and efforts are dedicated to the provision of technical assistance anchored to the individual child and his/her family. Approximately, 100 - 150 individual technical assistance initiatives are conducted each year. This represents an average of 3 on-site visits and 15 telephone calls/conferences for each individual technical assistance anchored to individual children. Technical Assistance efforts include program development (IEP development), planning processes, environmental adaptations, curriculum development, prescription and implementation of assistive technology, communication issues, augmentative / alternative communication and integrated therapies.

NOTE: GOAL 6 and GOAL 7 do not conform to the above format of distributing activities under the three service headings of Information & Resources, Training and Technical Assistance.

GOAL 6: IMPACT ON STATEWIDE SERVICES/SUPPORT SYSTEMS
To demonstrate a positive impact on the ability of the existing statewide service systems to better address the needs of infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment and their families.

Objective 6.1

To make available information and resources regarding the needs and requirements of appropriately supporting infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.

Activities	Accomplishments
6.1.1 To develop and disseminate N.J. TAP materials to identified agencies, organizations, and educational/habilitative programs throughout the state (e.g. Project Brochure/Fact Sheet)	A Pamphlet was developed which was designed to assist direct service personnel, family members and educational program personnel in determining if an individual was eligible for N.J. TAP services. This pamphlet encompasses the identification of hearing, vision and developmental delays which may indicate a multiple sensory impairment and referral to N.J. TAP. Additionally, Project activities are delineated on the back of the form and Project Associates are listed with their corresponding phone numbers. This link to N.J. TAP services has been disseminated to all LEAs within the state, Early Intervention Programs, state educational programs, parent organizations, private non-profit agencies and other state agencies associated with the disability field.
6.1.2 To develop and disseminate N.J. TAP Newsletter to identified agencies, organizations and educational/habilitative programs throughout the state.	The project newsletter was developed and disseminated on a bi-annual basis throughout the state to the same organizations listed in 6.1.1, families of registered infants, children and youth, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired personnel, other 307.11 projects, the Helen Keller National Center staff, TRACES personnel and upon request or in response to information and resource requests. Each newsletter had a specific theme (i.e. Parent/ Professional Relationships). A newsletter was not disseminated in the last grant cycle due to other demands but will be reinstated in the upcoming grant cycle and will be produced on a bi-annual basis with the assistance of PRISM (parent organization) and other consumer input.

6.1.3 To disseminate N.J. TAP fact sheets and associated materials which relate to awareness of sensory impairment within the SEAs Child Find Projects quarterly mailings.	Fact sheets, N.J. TAP Eligibility Criteria Checklists, and issues specific to infants with multiple sensory impairment were included in an annual mailing provided by the New Jersey Child Find Project. A collaborative relationship has been maintained with this initiative to assure accurate and early identification of infants and young children who are deafblind.
6.1.4 To assure that the N.J. TAP Statewide Toll Free Number is placed within the existing directories of Statewide Services	The toll-free number was listed in several directories including a Transition Services Guide which was disseminated statewide. However, as stated in previous accomplishments, N.J TAP is in the process of restructuring the use of the toll-free number and has not pursues publishing this number in directories developed in the last year of the grant cycle.
6.1.5 To respond to requests for articles and advertising within associated newsletters and other periodicals. This will include the Monthly Communicator (N.J. Division of the Deaf); The Bridge (N.J. Statewide Parent Advocacy Network); The Katzenbach News(N.J. State School for the Deaf); and the N.J. Developmental Disabilities Council Newsletter.	As requested, collaborated with the aforementioned newsletters to promote the project and its associated services and to advertise and invite participation at Project conferences. Additionally, the project assisted in the development and publication of a parent newsletter from PRISM, submitted an article for N.Y. TAP newsletter and had an article included in the TRACES newsletter.

Objective 6.2

To identify the statewide needs of infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment and their families.

Activities	Accomplishments
6.2.1 To conduct statewide assessment (survey) of parent/family needs for training and other support services.	This survey was accomplished through discussions and a simple survey format utilized at the annual Institute for Summer Studies. The parents/family members in attendance at the track designed specific to their needs assisted the Project Associates in delineating future topical conferences, planning for the next Summer Institute, and developing and collating resources/information/ and identifying support service needs.
6.2.2 To conduct statewide assessment (survey) of professionals' needs for training and other support services.	Information was gleaned most effectively at the Institute for Summer Studies and Topical Conferences. Professionals and direct service personnel was asked to list areas in which they would like to receive training and to identify specific technical assistance concerns as it related to the specific age group of students they provided services for. Additionally, this group was asked to list areas of need as it related to information and resources and the preferred avenue for access.

6.2.3 To develop and conduct regional focus groups of parents and professionals providing an opportunity for participants to share their perceptions, frustrations & other need areas.	The parent focus groups were conducted via the N.J. Parent Organization PRISM and attendees at the Annual Family Learning Weekends. The focus groups centered around professionals were conducted via the Network Teams (RD&N, EEN and DB STEP-UP). These focus groups provided an opportunity to provide feedback to N.J. TAP regarding current services on a local and state level, to identify needs, celebrate successes, and assist the Project in identifying and planning for future initiatives.
6.2.4 Compile and analysis annual technical assistance requests as an indicator of statewide needs.	This activity allowed the Project Associates to identify commonalities in technical assistance and training requests to assist us providing a wider range of statewide support through the Network Teams, Summer Institutes, Family Learning Weekends and Topical Conferences.

Objective 6.3

To assure that N.J. TAP is represented on a variety of associated advisory committees and organizations throughout the state to include the Administrators Roundtable of Programs for Students with Hearing Impairment, N.J. Coalition on Inclusive Education, N.J. Family Support Coalition, N.J. TASH, SEA's Inclusive Education Steering Committee & the Higher Education Council.

Activities	Accomplishments
Activities or approaches were developed within the context of the Project Associates Committee.	Project Associates are represented on a variety of advisory committees and involved in various organizational activities as it relates to best educational practices and services/supports critical to students with multiple sensory impairment. Project Associate representation and participation includes N.J. State Interagency Transition Team, Assistive Technology Advisory Committee, N.J. Coalition on Inclusive Education, SEA's Inclusive Education Steering Committee, N.J. Partnership for Transition from School to Adult Life for Youth with Disabilities, the N.J. Administrators of Programs for Students with Hearing Impairments, the Family Support Coalition, attendance at meetings of the Developmental Disabilities Council, and other committees and organizations as requested.

GOAL 7: PROJECT OPERATIONS/MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

To provide a solid infra-structure to N.J. TAP which will effectively and efficiently meet the informational, training and technical assistance needs of infants, children and youth with multiple sensory impairment.

Objective 7.1

To establish a comprehensive project advisory committee structure which provides direction and validation to the efforts of N.J. TAP.

Activities	Accomplishments
7.1.1 To identify, invite and convene a group of representatives from state agencies, local organizations, LEAs, advocacy groups, private non-profit agencies and other state based organizations to participate in two annual advisory sub-committee meetings and one annual full advisory committee meeting.	This advisory group met in the suggested format during the first year of the grant cycle. In the subsequent years, this group determined that meeting once a year was sufficient with the project providing them with bi-annual updates and information on activities and initiatives. This new format was established and has been a successful mechanism of support for the project. Participation in this group included the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Division of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, Office of Special Education Programs, St. Joseph's School for the Blind, Kean College Hearing Impaired Program, Katzenbach School for the Deaf, the University Affiliated Program, Early Intervention Program personnel, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Supported Employment Programs, Office of Education and other pertinent agencies.
7.1.2 To identify, invite and convene a group of parents/guardians, family members, consumers and/or interested individuals to participate in two annual advisory sub-committee meetings and one annual full advisory committee meeting.	As stated above, this group met in the suggested format during the initial year of the grant and agreed that an annual meeting was sufficient for the full group. However, membership from this group determined that they will provide on-going suggestions and input to the Project through a number of venues to include the parent group PRISM, and individual input to the Project Associates. Membership within this group included PRISM, adult consumers who are deafblind, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), Family Support Coalition and other interested family members.
7.1.3 To identify, invite and convene a group of out-of-state affiliates and in-state higher education staff to participate in two annual advisory sub-committee meetings and one annual full advisory committee meeting.	Again, this group decided that the two sub-committee meetings were not feasible and a yearly full advisory committee meeting was sufficient. Additional input was provided through collaboration on Project initiatives especially as it related to TRACES and the Helen Keller National Center and TAC. Activities with in-state higher education participants included representation from various state colleges who have included N.J. TAP in their training and educational activities.

Objective 7.2

To establish a committee structure that supports the N.J. TAP's interagency collaborative efforts and interdependent project design.

Activities	Accomplishments
7.2.1 Establish a Project Associate Team which is comprised of the full time staff of N.J. TAP.	This team was fully established and was comprised of the Project Director, Project Coordinator, the Information and Resources Project Associate and included the part-time Parent Project Associate and the Project Associate for Identification and Technical Assistance.

7.2.2 To convene bi-monthly Project Associate Team meetings to plan, organize and facilitate current and future project initiatives.	The Project Associates meet regularly to coordinate our activities and initiatives, discuss new technical assistance and training activities and to pro-actively address any issues or concerns which have arisen. The part-time Project Associates are included on a monthly basis in these meetings to provide guidance and support for their activities. During the last year of the grant cycle, the Project Associates determined the need to meet weekly to assure a more effective and collaborative approach in all our activities.
7.2.3 Establish a Project Management Committee meetings in conjunction with Project Associates Team meeting to address administrative and cooperative issues.	Due to the fact that Project is currently comprised of two agencies, the N.J. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and the N.J. Department of Human Services, Office of Education, the establishment of a formal committee did not seem an appropriate measure. The supervisors of the project personnel who would have comprised this committee of two agreed that a formal committee did not seem appropriate .
7.2.4 To convene quarterly Project Management Committee meetings in conjunction with Project Associate Team meetings to address administrative and cooperative issues.	The two supervisory personnel who would have comprised this committee agreed that the best mechanism for addressing any administrative issues would be on a less formal basis with the Project Associates meeting with their supervisors on monthly basis to provide an overview of the project's status and current initiatives. Less formally, Project Associates will speak with their respective supervisors to address any immediate issues or concerns.
7.2.5 To develop a Professional Consultant Network to compliment the technical assistance and training activities within the Project.	N.J. TAP has accessed a variety of consultants who present an expertise in deafblindness and/or current best practices in the field. These consultants have been utilized to assist in the development and presentation of our topical conferences, the Institute for Summer Studies and the Network Programs. Additionally, we have accessed consultants to assist in specific technical assistance initiatives as they relate to the specific need of the child and/or family (i.e. Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviors). This core group of consultants are familiar with N.J. TAP and its mission to include infants, children and youth into less restrictive/inclusive environments. We have developed positive relationships with these professionals and they are available as requested.
7.2.6 To develop a Parent Network to compliment the technical assistance and training activities within the Project.	A parent network was developed and is comprised of parents and family members of children of varying ages and ability levels. This complement of family members has been utilized to assist the Project during the Annual Institute for Summer Studies and the Annual Family Learning Weekend. Additionally, this core group of individuals have assisted in providing technical assistance around other families as it pertains to a variety of issues including transition, medical supports, financial issues, referrals to medical personnel, assistive technology and other areas as identified.

Census of Children with Multiple Sensory Impairment (deaf-blindness)

Your Link To N.J. TAP Project Services

- Does your child/student have both a visual and a hearing impairment?
- Does your child/student need accommodations due to his/her visual and hearing impairments?
- Are you eligible for technical assistance or training regarding a child with multiple sensory impairment?
- Not sure?.....

N.J. TAP

Please complete the N.J. TAP Eligibility Checklist and/or contact any of the N.J. TAP Project Associates for more information.

The New Jersey Technical Assistance Project (N.J. TAP) follows the federal definition which states: "... children and youth having auditory and visual impairments, the combination of which creates such severe communication and other developmental and learning needs that they cannot be appropriately educated without special education and related services beyond those that would be provided solely for children with hearing impairments, visual impairments, or severe disabilities, to address their educational needs due to these concurrent disabilities."

Student's Name:_____ **N.J. TAP Eligibility Checklist**

The New Jersey Technical Assistance Project (N.J. TAP) provides technical assistance, training and information and resources on behalf of children with multiple sensory impairment (deaf-blindness). To obtain services from N.J. TAP, a child (birth to 21) must meet at least one of the criteria within each of the following three areas:

Hearing	Vision	Developmental Concerns
❑ Documented auditory handicap meeting state eligibility requirements as cited in NJAC 6:28 OR ❑ Documented history of chronic otitis media especially during the first 6 years of life OR ❑ Documented hearing impairment (conductive, sensorineural, or mixed) of at least 30 decibels (dB) in at least one ear (aided) *A conductive hearing loss is caused by problems in the outer ear or middle ear (eg. blockage of the ear canal, damage to the ear drum, problems with the bones in the middle ear, fluid in the middle ear).* *A sensorineural hearing loss is caused by nerve damage to the inner ear.* *A mixed hearing loss is a combination of conductive and sensorineural impairments.* OR ❑ Documented syndrome/disorder (including genetic) associated with hearing loss (eg. CHARGE Association) OR ❑ Documented syndrome/disorder associated with progressive hearing loss (eg. Norrie Syndrome, Sticklers Syndrome, Kniest Syndrome, Goldinhar Syndrome, Mohr Syndrome, Paget Syndrome, Cockayne Syndrome, Hurler Syndrome) OR	❑ Documented visual handicap meeting state eligibility requirements as cited in NJAC 6:28 OR ❑ Documented syndrome/disorder (including genetic) associated with loss of vision (eg. Congenital Cataracts, Retinopathy of Prematurity, Retinal Blastomas, Noonan Syndrome, Morquio Syndrome, Marfan Syndrome, CHARGE Association) OR ❑ Documented syndrome/disorder associated with progressive or fluctuating vision loss (eg. Retinitis Pigmentosa, Usher Syndrome, Glaucoma) OR ❑ Diagnosis of cortical visual impairment from ophthalmologist and/or neurologist. *Cortical visual impairment results in the inability of an individual to process visual information.* OR ❑ Diagnosis of nystagmus *Nystagmus is an involuntary rapid movement of the eye.* OR ❑ Diagnosis of amblyopia after the age of 6 years *Amblyopia is uncorrectable blurred vision due to disuse of the eye.* OR	❑ At least one year delay on developmental assessments or one standard deviation from score expected on the basis of chronological age on standardized assessments in one or more of the following areas: a) communication skills (including speech and language) b) social skills c) spatial awareness and orientation d) basic concepts e) academic achievement f) visual and/or auditory guided movement g) self-help skills OR ❑ At risk for problems with independent living and/ or competitive employment upon graduation from high school OR ❑ At risk for problems with integration into family life/community activities OR ❑ At risk of getting hurt when walking/moving around independently OR ❑ Under the age of 5 years

Hearing	Vision	
❑ Diagnosis of auditory processing disorder following testing by a speech-language pathologist, audiologist, and/or psychologist. Reports from professionals may include such terms or descriptions as: *central auditory processing problem *central auditory processing dysfunction *difficulty understanding what is heard OR ❑ Suspected hearing impairment by caregivers and/or professionals who know the child based on: a) significant and otherwise unanticipated delay in receptive and/or expressive speech-language skills or b) responses to the full range of auditory stimuli in the environment is less than anticipated.	❑ History of untreated eye condition, such as cataracts, any time during the first 3 years of life. *Cataracts are a clouding of the lens of the eye.* OR ❑ Documented visual impairment of 20/70 or worse after correction in better eye or a loss in visual field. OR ❑ Suspected visual impairment by caregivers and/or professionals who know the child based on: a) visual attending and/or visual examining behaviors are less than anticipated or b) impaired visual-motor functioning, resulting from strabismus or cerebral palsy *Strabismus is a deviation of the eyes so they are not simultaneously directed to the same object.* OR ❑ Visual perception problems Examples of visual perception problems: *Child may be observed to overreach or underreach for objects *Child may misjudge where the food is on a plate *Child may be confused by color or texture of walking surface	**PLEASE NOTE: N.J. TAP is required under federal regulation (IDEA Part C, Section 622) to identify infants, children and youth who are deaf-blind. Therefore, N.J. TAP, as a program of the N.J. Department of Education maintains a comprehensive registry of all students that meet the criteria outlined in this checklist. This information is maintained in accordance with all federal and state regulations regarding pupil records and confidentiality.** Suggested uses for this checklist: 1) To determine eligibility for N.J. TAP services. 2) To evaluate each of the students in special education. 3) To present to parents as a tool to help develop an understanding of their child's need for program modifications because of sensory deficits. 4) To keep in child's records.

Eligible for N.J. TAP services? YES / NO

If YES, please contact one of the Project Associates listed on this brochure for more information.

Adapted from material by the Texas 307 11 Project and the Great Lakes Area Regional Center for Deaf-Blind Education.
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New Jersey Technical Assistance Project (N.J. TAP)

"Educational Resources and Support Services on behalf of Children with Multiple Sensory Impairment"

N.J. TAP is an initiative of the N.J. Department of Education which seeks to provide technical assistance and other support services regarding the education of children (ages birth to 21) experiencing hearing and vision difficulties.

What kind of technical assistance is offered by this Project?

- *On-site Technical Assistance anchored to a specific child*
- *Training to school personnel, parents and others*
- *Dissemination of information and resources (I&R)*
- *Other functions include needs assessments, family support networks, etc.*

Who provides the technical assistance?

A network of people trained and dedicated to address the best interest of children with hearing and vision problems. The N.J. TAP staff demonstrates specific skills in such areas as:

- *Identification/Assessment*
- *Family Support Services*
- *Education Rights*
- *Communication*
- *Validated Educational Practices*
- *Transition to Adulthood*

Who can request and/or receive N.J. TAP Project Services?

- *Families/Parents/Guardians*
- *Teachers*
- *Related Service Providers*
- *Administrators*
- *State/Non-Profit Agency Personnel*
- *Other*

N. J. Department of Education
Office of Special Education Programs

in partnership with

N. J. Department of Human Services
Office of Education

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